

*The Reasonableness of standing fast  
in English and in Christian Liberty.*

A  
**SERMON**

PREACH'D before 694.

The Right Honourable the

**LORD MAYOR,**

THE

**ALDERMEN,**

AND

**Citizens of LONDON**

In the Cathedral Church of St. Paul;

On Thursday November 5th, 1791

By **SAMUEL BRADFORD, D. D.**

Rector of St. Mary le-Bow, and Chaplain

in Ordinary to Her MAJESTY.

*The Second Edition.*

**L O N D O N:**

Printed for **John Wyat**, at the *Rose* in  
St. Paul's Church-Yard. **MDCCXIII.**

Price Three-pence.

*Stanier, Mayor.*

*Martis xvii. die Novemb. 1713.  
Annoq; R. Reginae Annæ Mag.  
Britanniæ, &c. Duodecimo.*

**I**T is Ordered, That the Thanks of this Court be given to the Reverend Dr. *Bradford*, for his Sermon Preached at the Cathedral Church of *St. Paul* on the Fifth Instant, before the Lord-Mayor, Aldermen, and Citizens of this City : And that he be desired to Print the same.

**GIBSON.**





DEDICATION

TO THE  
RIGHT HONOURABLE

Sir Samuel Stanier,  
Lord-Mayor of the City of London,

AND THE  
Court of ALDERMEN

Right Honourable,

✻✻✻✻✻ It is out of pure Obedience to your Order  
✻ I ✻ that I publish this Sermon, upon a Subject  
✻✻✻✻✻ which hath been so thoroughly exhausted,  
that nothing new can be said upon it.

However, this may serve as a Testimony to the  
World, that your Honourable Court doth yet retain  
an aversion to Popery, and a grateful Remembrance  
of our last, as well as our former Deliverance from  
it.

There are, I know, some Gentlemen, who are rea-  
dy to interpret every Discourse upon this Argument,  
even although it be on the Fifth of November, as a  
needless, if not a seditious Endeavour to propagate  
the

# DEDICATION.

the fear of Popery, at a Season when they say there is not the least ground for such fear.

Instead of being altogether of those Gentlemen's Opinion, I cannot but take their Insensibility, join'd with the present Assurance and Boldness of our Romish Adversaries, to be a fresh ground of apprehending danger from that Party of men, which from the time of the Reformation to this day hath been engaged in one continued Conspiracy against our Religion and our Government.

That Almighty God may disappoint their wicked Designs, and unite all Protestants in this Kingdom, in a grateful Remembrance of the glorious Instrument of our late Deliverance; in steadfast Loyalty to Her present most Excellent Majesty Queen ANNE and in a firm Adherence to the Protestant Succession in the illustrious House of HANOVER, is the hearty Prayer of,

Right Honourable

Right Honourable

Your most Faithful  
and Obedient Servant,

Samuel Bradford.



**GALAT. V. I.**

*Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith  
Christ hath made us free, and be not en-  
tangled again with the Yoke of Bondage.*



**T**HIS is a Day of solemn Thank-  
giving to Almighty God for two signal  
Blessings conferr'd upon our Church  
and Nation; one in the time of our  
fore-fathers; the other in the present  
Age. Now as the true Spring of Gra-  
titude is a deep Sense of the Value of those Blessings  
which have been receiv'd; so the natural effect of it  
is to take due care not to lose or forfeit them, but on  
the contrary to exert our best endeavours in all law-  
ful and reasonable Methods to continue and secure  
them. And this is agreeable to the admonition of  
our Apostle, in my Text, the occasion of which was  
this.

The Hebrew Nation was very zealous for the  
Law of Moses; and although it laid diverse Burdens  
upon that people, even a Yoke of bondage, as St. Paul  
here calls it, or as St. Peter expresseth  
it, *a Yoke which neither their fathers* Acts 15. 10.  
*nor they were able to bear*; yet upon  
their conversion to Christianity they were exceed-  
ingly backward to the throwing off this Yoke, and  
easing themselves of their burdens. Nay some  
of them endeavour'd to persuade the Gentile Con-

## The Reasonableness of standing fast

verts also to put this Yoke upon their Necks, and to bear these heavy burdens upon their shoulders. This error St. Paul vehemently opposed, both in his Epistle to the Romans, and in this to the Galatians. Particularly in the chapter before my Text he argues with the Jews from an allegorical interpretation of the history of Sarah and Agar, with their two Sons Isaac and Ishmael, the former a free woman with her Offspring partaking of her freedom; the other a bond-woman with her Offspring subjected to the same bondage with her. To the latter of these he compares the Jews, under the dispensation of Moses; to the former, the Christians, under the dispensation of Jesus Christ; concluding the chapter with those words, *So then, brethren, we (that is we Christians) are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free*, from which he infers by way of admonition in the words of my Text, *Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the Yoke of bondage*.

Now although these words as written by St. Paul have an immediate reference to the particular sort of liberty of which he was discoursing, viz. a freedom from the Yoke of the law as given upon mount Sinai, by virtue of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; yet the reason of the inference equally holds good in the case of any other real and valuable liberty, which Christ hath conferr'd upon his servants, so that we may lay down this Proposition as evidently deducible from my Text, *That the being made free by divine Providence with any real and valuable liberty lays us*



*in English and in Christian Liberty.* 3

*under an Obligation to stand fast in that liberty, and not willingly to suffer our selves to be entangled again with the Yoke of bondage.* Which Proposition I design to consider at this time, with a particular view of that liberty in which we of this Church and Nation rejoice on this day, from a Yoke of bondage which neither our Fathers nor we were able to bear.

Nor will it be improper to say in the words of my Text, That Christ hath made us free with this liberty. For since after his resurrection all power was committed to him, as cloathed in human nature, and he was given to be head over all things to the Church;

Matth. 28. 18.

Eph. 1. 22.

whatsoever publick Blessings are conferr'd upon a Nation professing his true Religion, particularly such whereby not only their civil, but also their spiritual liberties are preserv'd to them, are reasonably to be ascribed to him, who is the great Agent of the Father, in directing and governing, in preserving and defending his Church and people in the world.

My business therefore in treating on this Argument will be reducible to these three heads.

I. To shew what that liberty is, wherewith Christ hath made us free, wherein we this day greatly rejoice, and for which we are here assembled to express our gratitude to almighty God and our Saviour.

II. To shew the reasonableness of our standing fast in this liberty, and not willingly suffering our selves to be entangled again with that Yoke of bondage from which we have been delivered.

III. To consider what is to be done by us, what means are to be used, in order to our standing fast in this liberty.

#### 4 The Reasonableness of standing fast

I. Let us consider, what that *liberty* is, *where-  
with Christ hath made us free*, &c.

Now this, as I have already hinted, is twofold. *Civil* and *Spiritual*, which are in our case strictly join'd, so that we cannot be deprived of one, without losing both, nor be secure of one without retaining the other also. And as each of these Kinds of liberty were struck at by our enemies; so both the former and the later deliverance, which we this day commemorate, *made us free* with both of them together. Let us take a distinct view of each.

i. We were *made free with a spiritual liberty* when we were preserved from falling back into the *bondage of Popery*, and being again brought under the tyranny of the Bishop and Church of *Rome*, from which the Reformation had so happily rescued us.

Were there no burdens to be complain'd of in the Church of *Rome*, besides those innumerable vain and superstitious ceremonies which are introduced into divine worship, whereby the service of God and our Saviour, which is *perfect freedom*, is so grievously encumber'd, and render'd very uneasy and troublesome to a mind well inform'd about the nature of divine worship; we might account it a very desirable *liberty* to be freed from them. The ceremonial Institutions of *Moses's* law were of God's own appointment, design'd by him partly to employ the *Jews*, so as to preserve them by ritual Observances of their own from a compliance with the rites and ceremonies of their *Pagan* neighbours;



and partly to prefigure to those who had more discerning minds something more excellent under the Christian Institution: Notwithstanding all which they were a Yoke too heavy to be born even by *Jews* themselves. Surely then a vast number of needless and ridiculous ceremonies, imposed by ignorant and superstitious men, which have no other use but to obscure the worship instituted by our blessed Saviour, must justly appear grievous and irksome to a free and ingenuous Christian.

But alas! this is not all. If Idolatry in religious worship may fairly be accounted Slavery; if paying homage to *Creatures* together with *the Creator* of all, *God blessed for ever*, be a bringing the minds of men into undue subjection to their fellow-creatures, as well as dishonorable to their Maker and Redeemer; this is a farther *liberty* to which we have attain'd by our deliverance from Popery, namely, to render our homage to *the one true God*, to whom all *Creatures* in heaven and earth are equally subject, through the *one Mediator* between God and men, our Lord *Jesus Christ*.

Yet farther. Ignorance is the root of all spiritual bondage, it enslaves the mind of a reasonable creature, and renders a man mean, servile and abject in spirit. Now 'tis well known with what care the Church of *Rome* keeps her people in ignorance as to spiritual and divine matters, locking up that great treasure of knowledge, *the Book of God*, the holy Scriptures of the old and new Testament, in an unknown tongue, not daring to trust the common people with the perusal of those sacred Oracles, lest  
their

## 6 *The Reasonableness of standing fast*

their understandings should be enlighten'd to discover the gross Errors into which she has misled them; nay ordering her publick Service to be perform'd in the same strange language, in the hearing, but not at all to the understanding of those who are present.

There is yet another badge of Slavery upon the members of the *Romish* communion, namely, their avowed subjection to the Bishop of *Rome*; as to the Prince of the Christian Church, the Vicar General of Christ upon earth, to whose authority the whole Church, both Clergy and Laity, are servilely to submit, without any the least authority derived to him from the true and only Head of the Church, our blessed Lord and Saviour.

I shall give but one instance more, which is that detestable Slavery to which the *Roman Church* would subject the minds of all Christians, *viz.* not to judge freely and impartially for themselves in matters of Religion, nor honestly to speak what they think: but first to believe blindly as that Church believes, and then openly to profess and stand to such Faith, whatsoever they may upon mature consideration think to the contrary: Not to examine the Doctrines which they are taught, by the Principles of unbiass'd Reason and the Word of God; but to take what their Church says for granted, and to adventure their eternal Salvation entirely upon its credit: And if at any time through the convincing light of the Truth they are brought to differ in their Sentiments from that Church, or even but to doubt of any of the Doctrines it has establish'd,

not



not to declare the alteration or the wavering of their judgments, upon pain of censure in this world, and damnation in the next.

Certainly to be rescued from all this spiritual bondage, is to be preserv'd in a State of *Liberty*. And this is a very considerable part of that *liberty* *where- with* by the Deliverances of this day *Christ hath made us free*.

2. The other sort of *liberty* is that which is *civil*; and with this also *Christ made us free*, when he rescued us from *illegal* and *arbitrary power*, preserving to us our happy Constitution, in opposition to all the designs and endeavours of them who were undermining and ruining it.

The truth is, the *Romish* Religion is hardly to be maintain'd in any Nation but by arbitrary power: Without all question it is not to be restored, where the reform'd Religion hath been once settled by law, without first introducing a power above law.

The *Inquisition*, which was the great instrument whereby the Popish Religion was maintain'd at the time of the Reformation, in those Countries where it now reigns most absolutely, could never have been set up but under despotick power; the *Inquisition*, I say, whereby the most intolerable Tyranny, and the most diabolical Cruelty are exercised, both over the bodies and the souls of men. Nor could a Prince, in whose Countrey the Protestant Religion had for a long time been receiv'd and profess'd by a very considerable part of his Subjects, have entirely  
sup-

## 8 *The Reasonableness of standing fast*

suppress'd the open Profession of it, if he had been under the restraint of laws, if he could not have given sufficient Force to his *Edicts* with those powerful words, *This is our Will*. 'Tis for this reason, that the enemies of the Religion establish'd in these Kingdoms have, in order to the rooting it out, continually endeavor'd to change our frame of civil government, from *legal* to *despotick*, which, as every one knows, turns Subjects into Slaves, submits the Properties, Liberties, and Lives of all men to uncontrollable Will and Power, against which all Self-defence in any case whatsoever must be Treason, exposing to the forfeiture of life in this world, and of salvation in the next. This is that blessed and glorious form of Government, under which the far greater part of mankind are become miserable; and from which, together with the bondage of Popery, the Deliverances of this day have, thanks be to Almighty God, *made us free*.

So much may suffice for the *first* head I propos'd to speak to. I proceed to the next; *viz.*

II. To shew the reasonableness of our *standing fast in this liberty*, and not willingly suffering ourselves to be entangled again with that *Toke of bondage* from which we have been deliver'd. And certainly if the representation which I have made of this matter be true, (as common Sense and Experience may convince us that it is) there needs not much to be said to persuade us to value, and consequently steadfastly to adhere to the liberty which we enjoy. Notwithstanding which it may not be im-

proper



proper to suggest three or four Arguments to this purpose.

1. The *liberty* which we now enjoy is what originally belongs to us, as *Christians*, and as *Men*; and to which, as *Englishmen* and *Protestants* we lay a more particular claim.

The *spiritual* liberty which is preserv'd to us, is no other than that which is granted to us by the great Charter of the Gospel, which hath not only made us free from the ceremonial law of the *Jews*, but hath appointed us a reasonable and a spiritual Worship; and given us Precepts, the compliance with which naturally tends to the improving and enlarging our minds, the peace and welfare of our present lives, and our eternal happiness hereafter; Precepts worthy of God, and fit to be given to reasonable creatures, leaving us, as to all indifferent and undetermin'd circumstances in Religion, to the prudent determination of the Governors of those particular Churches to which we belong, whose business it is to take care that *all things be done decently and in order*, but without burdening the worship of God with any thing superstitious, or that may be truly grievous to a wise man.

We are farther not only allow'd but enjoin'd by the same Charter, to examine the Principles of our Religion our selves, to *search the Scriptures; to prove all things and to hold fast that which is good*. We have a sure Rule given us, by which we may try the Doctrines which we are to embrace or reject, namely, not only the light  
C of

John 5. 39.

1 Thes. 5. 21.

## 10 *The Reasonableness of standing fast*

of Reason, but that of the holy Scriptures, written by *Moses* and the *Prophets*, by the *Evangelists* and *Apostles* of our Lord, men endued with a divine Spirit on

*Isai. 8. 20.* purpose to teach the Will of God. We

are sent *to the Law and to the Testimony*, and assured, that *if any speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.* We are

not obliged, nor in the least encouraged, or so much as allow'd to yield an implicit faith to the dictates of any man, or of any Church in the world. On the

*Mat. 23. 9, 10.* contrary we are admonish'd *to call no man, Father, or Master, upon earth*, that

is, so as to receive the Principles of our Religion upon their meer word or credit: but to acknowledge, in that respect, *one Father which is in heaven*; and *one Master, which is Christ.* We are instructed to

own no other Head of the universal christian Church, but our Lord *Jesus Christ*, who hath appointed the several Bishops and Pastors of his Church here on earth to guide and govern their respective Churches under him, by his authority, and according to his

*2 Cor. 1. 24.* direction, not as those who are to have *dominion over our faith*, but to be our

*helpers* in the understanding and practising the Principles and Duties of our holy Religion;

*1 Pet. 5. 3.* not as *Lords over God's heritage*, but as *Ensamples to the flock.*

And as this is the original Charter of Christians, so we who are Protestants lay a special claim to be govern'd by it. It was upon this head that our Reformation at first began, and is still maintain'd. This is the first and main Principle which we insist upon



upon against the Church of *Rome*, That the holy Scriptures alone, not oral Traditions, are to be the Rule of our Faith and Practice in Religion; so that ever since the Reformation, all that stand to the Principles of it challenge this as their Christian Birthright, that they are freed from all humane impositions in Faith or Worship or Practice, which are inconsistent with this Rule.

In a word; by becoming *Christians*, we are abridged of none of those liberties which properly belong to us as *Men*. The Gospel doth not diminish but increase whatsoever is worthy of the name of Liberty to a reasonable creature.

There are indeed some, who have adventur'd to assert, that we are all born *Slaves*, and that down from *Adam* to this time every Subject that comes into the world, comes into it as a Subject to absolute and irresistible power. But as neither Reason nor Scripture teacheth us any such servile Doctrines, so those who are fond of them themselves must not expect that all mankind will surrender their natural liberty at once, without better proof than the vain presumptions and assertions of these men. Every man indeed that is born into the world owes a Duty to his natural Parents; and every man that is born where there is any civil Government settled, owes allegiance to the Governors of his native Countrey: but as no Parent has an absolute and uncontrolable power to do what he pleases with his children; so civil Governors have no other dominion over their Subjects than what the laws of their several Countreys respectively give them. And therefore we, who

## 12. *The Reasonableness of standing fast*

are the happy Natives of this Countrey in particular, as we are born under a *legal* Government, so we cannot be accounted *Slaves*, but *Subjects according to law*. As our blessed Saviour, when Luke 12. 14. upon earth, refused to take upon him to be a *Judge* or *Divider of Inheritances* between men; so all that understand his Gospel know very well, that *that* hath made no alteration in the civil Constitutions of Nations, but leaves Christians, as well as other men, to take them as they find them. So that I might well assert, That the Liberty which we now enjoy is what originally belongs to us, both as *Christians*, and as *Men*. But again,

2. It is that which hath been preserv'd to us from one Generation to another, by the special Providence of God interposing in the times of our greatest danger.

I will not stand to enumerate the several remarkable Providences by which we of this Church and Kingdom have had our civil and religious liberties preserv'd to us; it may suffice just to mention those two which this day particularly points out.

Our deliverance from the cruel and accursed Conspiracy in the Reign of King *James I.* was in so remarkable a manner, and in such a point of time, as that it has been continually own'd to bear upon it special Signatures of the Hand of God. When the Conspirators had with the utmost secrecy, and under the strictest mutual obligations not to discover or betray one another, carry'd on so villanous and unparallel'd a contrivance, designing the destruction of



of their King and Countrey at one blow, and when the time of execution was near at hand, the discovery was made and the execution prevented, by a letter from a private and unknown hand, out of the tenderness which one privy to the Conspiracy had for a particular Lord, and a desire that he might escape the common destruction; which letter, though written in very obscure terms, did by an extraordinary conjecture serve to put the Government upon a diligent search and enquiry, to the preventing the wicked enterprize, and seizing the chief Conspirators.

The deliverance in our own days was no less remarkable; nor had it fewer indications of the special favour of the Almighty in watching over and preserving us.

When our whole Constitution, and the Religion established by law were, in the sense and judgment of the whole Nation, exposed to the utmost hazard; when those who should have been the Guardians of both were the very Persons who exposed them; when the State of *Europe*, and particularly of the Countrys nearest to us, afforded us little hope of relief, but on the contrary increased our fears; then God raised up for us a glorious Deliverer, the late King, whose memory will be blessed among us, if not in the present, yet in future Generations; who landed on this very day so famous for our former great deliverance, as if Providence designed thereby to awaken us to a thankfull and joyfull reception of him; in favour of whose attempt God so disposed the Winds and Seas, the hearts of his Friends, and  
of

#### 14 *The Reasonableness of standing fast*

of his Enemies too, as to make all Opposition fall before him, and to give him a speedy and an happy Success in his great Undertaking, to the confusion of our Popish Adversaries, and to the great satisfaction and joy of those who heartily loved their Countrey and the Protestant Religion, and understood the true interest of both. After all which it must be an instance of the highest Ingratitude and Disingenuity, not to stand fast in the liberty with which God hath thus made us free. Again,

3. This is what without due care we may yet be in danger of losing.

'Tis true we are at present disengaged from that War in which we had a long struggle for all that was dear and valuable to us in this world; we have no foreign Prince or Nation in arms against us; we have an happy Constitution and excellent Laws at home; we are under the Government of a most gracious and excellent Queen, the Ornament and Glory, as well as the Defender of our Church, to whom God hath ever since her accession to the Throne given special marks of his favour, in the wonderful Successes and Victories which she obtain'd for many years successively, in her defending the liberties of Europe, and the Protestant Religion; and after all this it may be said, What can we reasonably fear?

But is it not as true, that we have many secret, and those restless and implacable Enemies both abroad and at home? I mean the Menagers of the Popish Interest, and the Emissaries which they employ: who from the time of our first deliverance to that of our last, nay from the time of our first Reformation

to



to this Moment have been and are incessantly plotting against our peace and welfare. Neither are these a meer loose and scattered, a rash, and inconsiderate Body of men: but a Body well formed and compacted, skilfully disciplin'd, prepar'd and furnish'd with all the proper Methods and Arts of carrying on their designs against us, and who, as Experience has taught us, particularly the Experience which we may have learn'd from this day, stick at nothing be it never so false and cruel, never so base and wicked, whereby they may serve the Interest of the *Romish Cause*.

But besides this, have we not all heard of a Pretender to her Majesties Crown and Dignity, who we may be well assur'd, wants not Will, but only Opportunity and Power to make his Pretences good? Have we not reason to apprehend, that even among our selves there are too many disposed to favour his Pretensions? When not only some despicable Pamphlets are scatter'd up and down amongst confiding Friends; when not only some insinuating Queries are given to Passengers in the Streets by unknown hands: but a large Volume \* fairly printed, is with Pomp and Ostentation publish'd and spread abroad, in order to the perverting the minds of her Majesties Subjects in favour of him: and when, added to all

---

\* N. The Book is entitl'd, *The hereditary Right of the Crown of England, asserted, &c.* It is fairly printed in folio, with the Printer's and Bookseller's Names at length. The Title-Page was posted up in all the most conspicuous places. An Advertisement of it was publish'd not only in the *Post-boy* but in the *Gazette* also.

## 16 The Reasonableness of standing fast

this, we cannot but observe with what coldness and indifference the memory of this days second deliverance, and of the glorious Instrument of it, is celebrated by many of those who still reap the fruits and benefits thereof.

To conclude this Head. When we view the present State of this part of *Europe*, and know that the most considerable Strength and Force of the Nations round about us are engaged on the side of *Popery*; and that even in a neighbouring Countrey, where learning did flourish more than in any other Part of the *Popish* Dominions, and where *Popery* put on its fairest appearance, yet that even there the reformed Profession is wholly suppress'd, and those who are suspected secretly to favour it are accounted and used as the worst of Enemies to their King and Countrey, neither permitted to act according to the dictates of their Consciences at home, nor to betake themselves to foreign Countries for refuge; we may modestly say, That without due care we may be still in danger of losing the liberty which we do at present enjoy. But once more.

4. Should this our liberty be at last wrested from us, we should (if possible) be subjected to a worse degree of Slavery, than if we had lost it, when we were last in danger.

Should our Enemies of the *Romish* faction prevail against us, they would remember, and they would make us also to remember, and to pay dearly for all the opposition we have made to their designs these twenty five years past. Their rage would heighten the natural inclination they have to reduce us to the vilest



vilest Servitude both of body and mind. For what can be imagined more tyrannical and cruel than the Spirit of Popery broken loose after a great restraint put upon it, and push'd on not only by a settled Principle, but by implacable hatred and revenge? But I will not on a day of rejoicing enlarge on so melancholly a Subject. Give me leave only to say, That if such Considerations as these shall seem slight and inconsiderable to us; if our mutual jealousies and our Party quarrels can so far blind our eyes, as to make us more apprehensive of danger from one another, than from our common Enemies, it must be resolved into an Infatuation from heaven, in order to our just punishment for our impiety and ingratitude.

III. But I hasten to the last Head I propos'd, viz. to consider briefly, What is to be done by us, what means are to be used, in order to our *standing fast in this liberty*. Now these Means ought undoubtedly to be such, and only such as are perfectly consistent with our duty to almighty God, and to those whom he by his good Providence hath placed in Authority over us, viz. such as these following.

I. It is expedient in order to this End, that we should faithfully adhere to those Principles upon which our liberty both spiritual and civil is founded.

At the beginning of the Reformation, both in our own Countrey and in other Parts of Europe, there was a great Zeal apparent in those who forsook the communion of the Roman Church, and maintain'd the Protestant Profession. They did not withdraw

## 18 *The Reasonableness of standing fast*

from that Communion upon Motives which they judged to be slender and inconsiderable; but upon such as they apprehended to make their separation absolutely necessary. They charg'd the *Romish* Worship with *Idolatry*. They profess'd to look upon the Bishop of *Rome* as the great *Antichrist* spoken of in the propheticall books of holy scripture, and upon the degeneracy of the *Roman* Church as the great *Apostacy* predicted in those sacred Writings. How we of this Nation came to be more complemental to that degenerate Church; and though we still persist-ed in our separation from it, yet began to avoid laying so heavy a charge upon it, is too well known. The unhappy Marriages concluded between our Princes, and Princesses of the *Romish* communion might make it seem unmannerly and become unfashionable to speak too severely of a Religion profess'd by those who were taken into so near Affinity with us. The miserable consequences of those Marriages were such, as at last to occasion a Law for the total Prevention of the like practice for the future; although we were not so prudent, till after a Prince of the *Romish* communion having been actually on the Throne had open'd our Eyes, and discover'd our danger to us. And since we have been once again rescued from that danger, we have reason to look back upon the state of our *primitive Reformation*, and to consider seriously, whether we have the least ground to entertain more favourable opinions of *Popery*, than our fore-fathers had.



If the Worship of the Church of *Rome* be really *idolatrous*; if the marks of the great *Apostacy* foretold in the Book of God be found plainly upon that Church; if the Bishop of *Rome* have all the characters of *the man of sin* described in the Apostolical Writings; if *Idolatry*, *Falshood* and *Cruelty* join'd together are the certain characters of the anti-christian *Beast*, and are to be seen no where so conspicuously as in that apostate Church; (all which has been strongly asserted, and with great force of argument proved by some of our most learned and judicious Protestant Writers) then certainly we can have no reason to entertain any softer Opinion of her, than our first Reformers did, but with them must look upon our selves as admonish'd by a divine *Call to come out of her*, so as utterly Rev. 18. 4 to forsake her; *not to be Partakers of her Sins*, lest we receive also of her Plagues.

As to our *civil liberties*, with which also we have been made free, I may be allow'd, at least on such a Day as this, to say, That if we would stand fast in them, it must very ill become us to vilify the Means and Instruments by which they were preserv'd to us. It has been fashionable of late to inveigh against *Revolution-Principles*, as in derision they are term'd. If hereby be meant the Principles upon which a stop was put to the current of *Arbitrary Power* and *Popery*, and upon which our *legal Constitution* and *Government*, together with the *Protestant Religion* were preserv'd, there can be no reason to wonder, that either profess'd *Papists*, or such others as openly refuse to swear Allegiance to her Majesty, should de-

## 20 *The Reasonableness of standing fast*

clare against such Principles, nor would it be worth our Notice in this Place. But when there are to be found amongst our selves, *Englishmen* and profess'd *Protestants*, even such as have given the present Government all the assurance that a solemn *Oath* and *Abjuration* can give it, who shall yet either openly applaud, or at least give too plain Signs of their approving this manner of treating our late Deliverance; 'tis time for those who love their Countrey and their Religion to speak freely upon such an occasion as this, and to admonish others plainly of the dangerous tendency of this behaviour.

If the *Revolution* which we glory in this day were nothing else but a *prosperous Rebellion*; if the Nation did a wicked thing in defending itself against *Pope-ry* and *Slavery*; if it were a Sin, an heinous and damnable Sin in those, who in order to this end gladly receiv'd and join'd with the glorious Instrument of our late Deliverance; Why are we here assembled to render our unfeigned thanks to God for filling our hearts again with joy and gladness, and putting a new Song into our Mouths, by bringing his late Majesty upon this Day for the Deliverance of our Church and Nation from *Popish Tyranny* and *Arbitrary Power*? and to adore the Wisdom and Justice of that Providence which so timely interpos'd in our extreme Danger, and disappointed all the Designs of our Enemies? And again, Why do we most humbly praise and magnify the most glorious Name of God for his unspeakable goodness towards us, express'd in that act of his mercy, on this day wonderfully conducting his servant our late King, and bringing him safely into England,

to



*to preserve us from the attempts of our Enemies to bereave us of our Religion and Laws?* And finally, With what face can we bless God for giving his late Majesty a safe arrival here, and for making all opposition fall before him till he became our King and Governor? Why do we not blot these Words out of the Prayers for this day? Nay, Why do we not, instead of giving thanks and praises to God in this manner, repent of our great and *National Sin*, and to make sure work, give up our selves into our Enemies hands, as a sincere evidence and testimony of our unfeigned repentance?

I will not deny, but that an honest man may submit to and acquiesce in what hath been brought about by the divine Providence for the publick good, although it be done in a way not altogether agreeable to his private Sentiments. But I will adventure to say, That such Persons are the most unlikely to *stand fast in the liberty with which they are made free*, who disapprove and condemn the means of their deliverance. And I may add, That those who are continually speaking contemptuously of the late happy *Revolution*, and decrying the Principles upon which it was carried on and finally settled, do in effect undermine the ground we stand upon, and (what in them lies) shake the foundations of the Government which is so happily establish'd amongst us.

## 22 The Reasonableness of standing fast

If we would stand fast in the liberty wherewith we are made free, let us, from all the Experience we have had of the design of our Enemies, and the goodness of God in delivering us out of their hands, learn at last to unite amongst our selves, and with one heart and joint endeavours to oppose our whole force against the common Enemy.

Blessed be God, we are yet standing upon the Foundation upon which the late Revolution placed us, the Government settled upon a Protestant Queen, and entail'd upon a Race of Protestants only. Our Liberties and our Religion are as secure as Laws can make them. But there is one thing whereby our Enemies of the Church of Rome have had constantly great advantage against us, and which we are not yet duly sensible of, I mean our mutual jealousies and animosities amongst our selves. We have indeed various differences amongst us, with respect to our Sentiments in Religion: but certainly none such, as should tempt any one Party of profess'd Protestants to fear another, so much as all of us have reason to fear those of the Roman Profession; a Body of men so thoroughly united against all Protestants without distinction, and so thoroughly skill'd and exercis'd in the arts of deluding and overreaching us, and playing of us one upon another by turns, that it is only by the special Providence of God that we have hitherto escaped. And nothing could so entirely discourage and disappoint all  
their



their Plots against us for the future, as to behold us, instead of our foolish contentions amongst our selves, uniting our common skill and strength in opposition to their devices.

To conclude,

3. If we would *stand fast in our liberty*, let us testify our Gratitude to Almighty God, our great Deliverer, for his signal favours to us, by using the liberty we enjoy, as becomes wise men and good Christians. Let us charge our selves with living strictly according to the Precepts of that holy Religion which we profess. Let our tempers and practices be such, as become those who have the holy Scriptures lying open before us for our information and direction. Let us, as we are permitted and encouraged to do, carefully examine the Principles of our Religion. Let us particularly inform our selves, wherein the real difference lies between the *Romish* and the *Protestant* Churches, that we may be upon Principle zealous both for the profession and practice of true primitive Christianity, as retrieved from the Errors and Corruptions of Popery. Let us, in a word, approve our selves as much better Christians than those of the Church of *Rome*, as our advantages are greater than theirs.

Finally, let us use also our civil liberties with all due sobriety and modesty, reverencing and obeying our Governours, being just and kind, gentle and charitable

24 *The Reasonableness of standing fast, &c.*

ritable towards our fellow-subjects, always endeavouring to promote the true Interest of our Countrey and our Religion; preferring that to all our own particular inclinations or humours, and to all the separate Interests of the several Parties into which we may have unwarily listed our selves.

In the use of these means we may hope to be continued under the special Protection of that Divine Providence of which we have had repeated Experience, particularly in the Deliverances of this day.

*Now to almighty God our great deliverer and preserver, be given, as is most due, all Praise and Glory for ever. Amen.*

wherein the real difference lies between the Roman and the Protestant Churches, that we may be upon principle zealous both for the doctrine and practice of true primitive Christianity, as retrieved from the errors and corruptions of Popery. For us, in a word, approve our selves to be better Christians than those of the Church of Rome, for advantages are greater than theirs.



Typical, let us also our civil liberties with all the liberty and honesty, retaining and obeying our Government, being just and kind, gentle and civil.



